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C O N F I D E N T I A L VILNIUS 001520

SIPDIS

STATE FOR EUR/NB AND DRL

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [LH](#)

SUBJECT: LITHUANIA TO WORK THROUGH EU ON ANY IRAQ
OBSERVATION MISSION

Classified By: POL/ECON OFFICER TREVOR BOYD
FOR REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D)

1. (C) Acting AS for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor Michael Kozak on December 3 discussed with Foreign Minister Antanas Valionis the possibility of Lithuania's participation in an Iraqi election observer mission. Ambassador Kozak, in Vilnius for a GOL-sponsored conference on supporting democracy in EU's New Neighborhood, suggested consolidating international contributions to the upcoming election observer efforts in Iraq under the broad banner of the Community of Democracies. Valionis pledged to consult with other countries in the region with a view towards organizing and providing election observers.

2. (C) We resumed the discussion with Saulius Jaskelevicius, head of MFA's Africa and Middle East Division, when we delivered the text of a DRL non-paper on the international observer mission for Iraqi elections to on December 7. We also discussed Lithuania's invitation to a December experts' meeting on an Iraqi observation mission in Ottawa. Jaskelevicius told us December 14 that Lithuania's Embassy in Ottawa will represent the GOL at the IFES and Elections Canada-sponsored event. Budgetary constraints, not lack of interest or commitment, said Jaskelevicius, preclude a bilateral observer mission to Iraq under the auspices of a Community of Democracy mission. The GOL supports in principle a common EU observer mission to Iraq, he said, but it will wait and see how this operation develops before deciding whether to send observers under that collective umbrella.

3. (C) Comment. Lithuania has always punched above its weight in supporting Coalition objectives where Iraq is concerned. In addition to putting boots on the ground in Iraq, the GOL hosted an observation mission by a delegation of Iraqi political party leaders during Lithuania's parliamentary elections. The GOL simply doesn't have the funds to send observers to Iraq now.
Mull